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John Carter Brown.

Harold Brown.

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By Benjamin Franklin

See Ford, P.L. Franklin Bibliography, p 313.

A

MEMORIAL

OF THE

CASE

OF THE

GERMAN EMIGRANTS

SETTLED IN THE

BRITISH COLONIES

OF

PENSILVANIA, and the back Parts of
MARYLAND, VIRGINIA, &c.

LONDON:

Printed in the Year MDCCLIV.

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A

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OF THE

German Emigrants ſettled in *Penſilvania*, &c.

IT appears by the moſt authentick accounts, that for many years laſt paſt, very large numbers of *Germans* have tranſported themſelves into theſe *Britiſh* provinces of *North America*; the greateſt part of them from *Switzerland* and the *Palatinate*, many from *Wirtemberg*, *Swabia*, *Juliers* and

Berg,

Berg, and other places along the *Rhine*, and ſome few lately from the *lower Saxony*; above thirty thouſand of them within the laſt ten years, and in one ſingle year, 1750, more than ten thouſand.

The cauſes of their removal from their native countries were various. Some of them fled from the ſevere perſecutions they were expoſed to at home, on account of their being proteſtants; others from the oppreſſions of civil tyranny, and attracted by the pleaſing hopes of liberty, under the milder influence of the *Britiſh* government; others were drawn by the ſolicitations of their countrymen, who had ſettled there before them; but far the greateſt part by the proſpect they had of relieving themſelves under their deep poverty, and providing better for themſelves and their families, in the provinces to which they reſpectively retired. In the ſingle colony of *Penſilvania*, the inhabitants, excluſive of the *Indian* Natives, are reckoned to be about 190,000; amongſt theſe are above 100,000 *Germans*, or *High Dutch*, of whom about 30,000 are of the proteſtant reformed religion, near as many of them *Lutherans*, above twelve thouſand papiſts, and the reſt of them baptiſts, herenhutters, and of various other ſects and denominations.

They are eſteemed to be generally laborious, induſtrious, bold, couragious and reſolute, but withal obſtinate, ſuſpicious, and liable to quarrelling and mutinies; and

having

having been bred up ſlaves, and extreamly ignorant, they know not the proper uſe of liberty, and therefore too frequently abuſe it. Many of them however are very worthy people, have a real and deep ſenſe of religion, and are extreamly concerned at their not having the means of inſtruction themſelves, and of bringing up their children and families in the knowledge of the great principles and duties of chriſtianity. Their occupation is moſtly huſbandry, and they are reckoned excellent farmers, have made great improvements in the countries where they reſide, and ſome few of them, by their diligence and ſkill in agriculture, have gained very conſiderable eſtates.

They are diſperſed all over the province of *Penſilvania*, and moſtly in diſtinct farms, at a mile's, and frequently at a farther diſtance from each other. Some of them however are formed into ſettlements in particular towns. There are many of them in *Philadelphia*, others in *Germantown*, *Yorktown*, *Readingtown*, *Eaſttown* and *Newtown*. They have alſo a ſettlement in *Maryland* called *Frederickſtown*, and another in *Virginia* of the ſame name.

The *Indian* natives, called *Iroquois*, *&c.* have, in proportion to the increaſe of the new *European* inhabitants, continually retired farther north of our ſettlements, and have been firmly attached to the *Engliſh* intereſt. They are divided into ſix nations, each of which hath its pro-

per king or chief. Four of them came into *England*, in the year 1710, to repreſent the dangers our colonies on the continent in *North America* were threatened with from the *French* in *Canada*, and to offer their ſervice in an expedition againſt them, and joined general *Nicholſon* with about 2000 men on his march to attack *Monreal*; and 'tis of the utmoſt importance to the ſafety and welfare of thoſe northern colonies, both to keep theſe *Indian* tribes faſt in their affection to the *Britiſh* nation, and to unite and incorporate the *German* emigrants with the body of his majeſty's ſubjects in thoſe provinces, to prevent the miſchiefs which muſt neceſſarily ariſe, ſhould they ever unite with the *French*; who lying on the north of our ſettlements, *Canada* being contiguous to them, have a perpetual eaſy intercourſe with, and are continually practiſing on both of them, and leave no method untried to gain them over to their intereſt. And this, with reſpect to the *Germans*, there is the more reaſon to be apprehenſive of, if timely care be not taken to prevent it, as the *French* themſelves have a conſiderable body of popiſh *Germans*, planted near to thoſe in our own provinces; who, as they are countrymen, and ſpeak the ſame language, may more eaſily ſeduce and corrupt them. And that the hindering ſuch a coalition of them with the *French* deſerves the moſt ſerious and immediate attention even of the legiſlature, will be acknowledged, when 'tis conſidered,

that

that in the late war, they ſome of them declared, both in converſation and printed papers, that ſhould the *French* invade *Penſilvania*, 'twould be their intereſt to remain neuters; ſince ſhould the *French* ſucceed in ſuch an attempt, they might promiſe themſelves the ſame ſafety and protection under them, as they enjoyed under the *Engliſh*: A fact this, which hath been confirmed by perſons of the firſt character and credit in *Penſilvania*.

Whatever be their different perſuaſions, yet they all of them enjoy the free and undiſturbed exerciſe of their religion. The colony of *Penſilvania*, where by far the greateſt numbers of them are, is in particular eſtabliſhed upon the large and catholick plan of the moſt extenſive liberty; ſo that no one ſingle profeſſion or ſect can moleſt the other, in their perſons or properties, upon account of any religious principles or differences whatſoever; all being equally intitled to the protection of the government, the benefit of the laws, and priviledges of the country.

But as this great body of emigrants was generally of the loweſt and meaneſt of the people in the countries they left, they came into our colonies in the moſt wretched and deſtitute circumſtances; without ſubſtance, attended with few, if any miniſters to teach them, incapable of ſupporting them could they have procured any, wholly unprovided with bibles, or books of religion and morality,

lity, in that language, which alone they underſtood, or with any kind of proper helps to inform themſelves, or educate their children.

In theſe unhappy circumſtances, about 20 years ago, they ſent over into *Holland*, one Mr. *Weiſs*, a *Dutch* miniſter, accompanied with one *Reiff* an elder, to repreſent their neceſſitous and diſtreſt condition to the ſynods of *North* and *South Holland*, and the claſſis of *Amſterdam*, earneſtly entreating their chriſtian pitty and aſſiſtance; who met with the kindeſt reception in that country, and obtained a generous contribution from the inhabitants of it. But *Reiff*'s diſhoneſty, with whom the collection was intruſted, and who converted moſt part of it to his own uſe, prevented the pious intentions of the contributors from being anſwered.

In the year 1746 Mr. *Michael Schlatter*, miniſter at *St. Gall* in *Switzerland*, determined, from a truly chriſtian ſpirit, to viſit his brethren in the *Britiſh* colonies, had a commiſſion from the ſynods of *North* and *South Holland* to enquire into the ſtate of the *German* proteſtants there, and arrived at *Philadelphia* in autumn that year; from which time he ſpent four years and upwards in viſiting them, eſpecially thoſe of the proteſtant reformed religion; and during that period, as appears from the very exact journal he kept of all his tranſactions, in order the more effectually to unite them, and bring them

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into a ſtate of ſome regularity and order, he travelled, with an incredible diligence and indefatigable zeal, above 8000 *Engliſh* miles, and preached to his countrymen 625 times, and found, that amongſt the 46 congregations, conſiſting of above 30,000 perſons, into which he had divided them, they had only four miniſters to preach, and give the ſacraments to them.

And what made their ſituation the more affecting and worthy of compaſſion was, that not one of thoſe congregations was provided with well qualified ſchool-maſters; the reaſon of which was, that though there might have been found ſome few perſons, tolerably fit for ſuch a work, yet none of them would undertake it, without the reaſonable proſpect of ſuch an encouragement, as would be a moderate ſupport for themſelves and families; an encouragement, which thoſe deſtitute people, rich in children, but poor in money, were utterly incapable of affording them; in conſequence of which, the ſentiments of religion, which ſome carried with them out of their native countries, were greatly worn off; whilſt others of them were filled with the moſt diſtreſſing apprehenſions, leaſt themſelves and their families ſhould gradually degenerate into the darkneſs and idolatries of the *Indian* nations, or the corruptions and ſuperſtitions of popery.

In the ſpring of the year 1751 Mr. *Schlatter* returned to *Holland*, and laid his journal before the proteſtant churches of that country, together with a very ſolemn and moving addreſs, from the chief of thoſe proteſtant emigrants, earneſtly intreating the kind aſſiſtance of their fellow-chriſtians and proteſtants there, in their moſt melancholy and deſtitute circumſtances; and their caſe having been repreſented to the ſtates of *Holland* and *Weſt-Frieſland*, their high mightineſſes, under the auſpicious influence of his moſt ſerene highneſs, the late prince of *Orange* and *Naſſau*, agreed to allow them 2000 guilders *per annum* for the ſpace of five years ſucceſſively, and the city of *Amſterdam* alone generouſly raiſed 12000 guilders, towards ſupplying them with ſome miniſters, ſchoolmaſters, bibles, and other good practical books in their own language.

In the beginning of the year 1752 Mr. *David Thompſon*, one of the miniſters of the *Engliſh* church in *Amſterdam*, was commiſſioned by the ſynods of *North* and *South Holland*, the claſſis of *Amſterdam*, and the miniſters and elders of the *Engliſh* church in that city, to repreſent their caſe to the churches of *England* and *Scotland*, and to ſolicit their kind and brotherly aſſiſtance. He had the honour to lay their unhappy condition before many perſons of the firſt rank and ſtation in church and ſtate, and particularly before the lords of the regency, who

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with a condeſcenſion and goodneſs natural to great and noble minds, and with a compaſſion and tenderneſs inſeparable from humane and benevolent hearts, permitted him to plead their cauſe, and won over by his arguments, confeſſed it worthy their own, and the moſt ſerious attention of the publick.

In the laſt year 1753, ſeveral noblemen and gentlemen, taking the unhappy circumſtances of theſe deſtitute emigrants into their conſideration, voluntarily united themſelves into a ſociety, for their more effectual releif, by receiving and applying to their benefit, the monies that might be collected for this neceſſary and uſeful Purpoſe; and upon the humble repreſentation of their caſe by the ſaid ſociety to the king, his majeſty hath been graciouſly pleaſed, out of his fatherly goodneſs, and princely generoſity, to grant the ſum of one thouſand pounds; and her royal highneſs, the princeſs of *Wales*, ever ready to, and liberal in all works of mercy, hath alſo given one hundred, to be by the ſaid ſociety diſtributed, towards carrying on this important and benevolent ſervice; and upon laying their circumſtances, by Mr. *Thompſon*, before the church of *Scotland*, a very generous collection hath been made for them by that church, of conſiderably above twelve hundred pounds, the amount of the whole not being as yet exactly known.

But conſidering the large and increaſing multitude, that are the objects of this charity, who will require an

annual relief, at leaſt for ſome few years to come, effectually to civilize, and incorporate them with the *Britiſh* inhabitants, amongſt whom they reſide; a much greater ſum, than what hath been yet gathered, will be abſolutely neceſſary to accompliſh theſe ſalutary views; and therefore the ſociety promiſe themſelves, from the truly royal and princely examples that have been given in this inſtance, and that benevolent and generous diſpoſition which is the diſtinguiſhing glory of the *Britiſh* nation, and of which, within theſe few years paſt, there have ariſen ſuch publick and ſtately monuments, that a deſign, on which the welfare of ſo many thouſand perſons, and their poſterity, and indeed the intereſt, peace, proſperity, and even ſafety of all our northern *American* colonies depend, will not be ſuffered to become ineffectual, through the want of a proper fund to ſupport it.

It is what univerſal experience teaches, and what every man of reflection will allow, that mechanick arts and commerce are the offspring of induſtry, and flouriſh only where property is not precarious; that induſtry and property in great meaſure depend on virtue and liberty; and that liberty and virtue dwell only with knowledge and religion. And as proper teachers and faithful inſtructors are neceſſary to promote knowledge and religion, the ſociety propoſes to ſend over and encourage a few miniſters more than they now have, to inſtruct theſe emigrants in their own language; at the ſame time recommending

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it to theſe miniſters to learn the *Engliſh* language themſelves, and promote the learning it amongſt their people, that they may in time be able to preach to them in it one part of every *Sunday* in their reſpective congregations; with an aſſurance, that in proportion to their improvements in this reſpect, they ſhall have ſuitable marks of the ſociety's regard and friendſhip towards them.

But as the principal ſucceſs, of what the ſociety aims at, will almoſt entirely depend on the care that ſhall be taken of the children of theſe emigrants, for 'tis indeed in the riſing generation, that we are to expect the deſired coalition; the ſociety propoſes to found ſeveral ſchools, in ſuch places of our colonies, as ſhall be judged moſt proper, for the inſtruction of them in the *Engliſh* tongue, and bringing them up in the plain unconteſted principles of chriſtianity and morality, and to no farther degrees of knowledge, than what are ſuited to their circumſtances and occupations; that by ſuch an education, and daily converſe with *Engliſh* children, taught in the ſame ſchools with them, they may contract ſuch early friendſhips with each other, as may in time lead to thoſe intermarriages, and create that ſameneſs of intereſts, and conformity of manners, which is abſolutely neceſſary to the forming them into one people, and bringing them to love, and peaceably ſubmit to the ſame laws and government. And this will be acknowledged to be an affair of the greater

importance, when the inconveniencies are conſidered, which have already riſen from the want of it, eſpecially in *Penſilvania*; where the more civilized *Germans* import foreign books, have their own printing-houſes, their news-papers, their bonds, and other legal ſecurities all in their own language, becauſe they underſtand no other; and even where the very courts of judicature conſtantly need interpreters, from the vaſt increaſe of *German* buſineſs, who may be ſoon wanted in the aſſembly itſelf, to tell one half of the legiſlature, what the other ſays; inconveniencies that can never ceaſe, till they become one, in language, affection, and intereſt with the ſubjects of *Great Britain*, the conſequence of which will be, if it can be happily accompliſhed, that no arts of our enemies will be able to divide them from us, or render them indifferent to our welfare and ſecurity.

And as the inſtruction of theſe children, either in the *Engliſh* language, or the common principles and duties of religion and morality, can never be ſucceſsfully carried on, without proper books adapted to theſe purpoſes, the ſociety farther intends to ſend over to *Penſilvania*, &c. a conſiderable number of *Engliſh* bibles, teſtaments, and ſpelling-books; ſome ſhort catechiſms, plain and eaſy for children, ſome primmers, with a few other good books, in *German* and *Engliſh*; that at the ſame time they are learning our tongue, they may learn alſo,

what

what will make it an invaluable advantage to them, their duty to God, love and gratitude to their *britiſh* benefactors, and a due obedience and ſubmiſſion to that happy conſtitution and government, to which they owe their protection, inſtruction, and liberties, both religious and civil, and which they will be bound, by all the ſacred ties of gratitude, intereſt and duty, with the utmoſt zeal and ſtedfaſtneſs to ſupport.

A ſcheme thus calculated for the advantage of ſo large a number of perſons, now become the ſubjects of the *Britiſh* crown, who cultivate a country, which in times of peace maintains a flouriſhing trade, and in times of war ſupplies aſſiſtances of various kinds againſt the common enemy; a ſcheme ſo neceſſary to promote the honour and peace and ſtrength of his majeſty's government, and to the welfare, proſperity and ſecurity of our northern colonies; a ſcheme to render a very formidable body of men uſeful at home, and an impregnable barrier againſt invaſions from abroad; to preſerve them from being corrupted and ſeduced by any from amongſt themſelves, or by our foreign enemies, and from being indifferent to, or betrayers of the intereſts of thoſe, who have given them a kind and hoſpitable reception; a ſcheme for ſtrengthening the proteſtant religion, and ſupporting the *Britiſh* liberties; to preſerve the beſt principles of thoſe who have any, and to inſtill the beſt principles into the tender

der minds of thoſe, who may otherwiſe be for ever without them; ſo conducive to the honour of our common chriſtianity, and the beſt intereſts of ſociety and government; that hath only in view the happineſs of men in the preſent life, and their ſalvation in a better, and is calculated for the good of the moſt diſtant poſterity; a ſcheme that hath theſe benevolent and generous ends, in which all the various branches of charity are united; that if encouraged will do honour to our eſtabliſhed church, hath been ſome years carrying on by the proteſtant churches abroad, and deſerves the ſupport of all that are friends to the proteſtant religion and liberties at home: ſuch a ſcheme, 'tis hoped, cannot fail of ſucceſs, thro' the want of thoſe liberal aſſiſtances, from the great and affluent, that are neceſſary to ſecure it.

Let any one imagine to himſelf upwards of an 100,000 ſtrangers, flying their native country, ſome thro' the unrelenting rigours of popiſh perſecution, ſome from the oppreſſion of the iron hand of civil tyranny, and others thro' the pinching neceſſities of extream poverty; flying for refuge from theſe intolerable evils, into the *Britiſh* dominions, the favourite ſeat of liberty; ſtrangers to our laws and manners, ſtrangers to the bleſſings of freedom in the countries where they were born, and in general uninſtructed in the right uſe and value of it, in the countries where they now enjoy it; ſtrangers, who many of them tranſported themſelves for the ſake of religion from their

native

native ſoil, and yet in their new ſettlements are almoſt deſtitute of the means and inſtitutions of it; in pain for themſelves, leſt their beſt impreſſions ſhould be loſt, and mourning over their children for fear they ſhould grow up in the groſſeſt ignorance, ſtupidity and vice; earneſtly wiſhing, and hitherto almoſt wiſhing in vain, for the inſtructions of the word of life, to feed and comfort their own minds, and anxiouſly caſting up their eyes to God and man, and as yet ſeemingly regarded but little by either, that their numerous poſterity may not be ſuffered wholly to periſh for lack of knowledge; ſtrangers, that have large numbers of their own countrymen amongſt themſelves, that watch every opportunity to tempt them from that profeſſion, which they went into a voluntary exile for the liberty of enjoying, and reconcile them to thoſe idolatries and impieties, that at home put them in continual dread of impriſonment and death; who in their neighbourhood, on one ſide, have many others of them equally zealous to propagate the ſame errors and corruptions amongſt them, under the influence of a nation, that are hereditary enemies to the religion and liberties of *Great Britain*; and on the other ſide, have the darkneſs and ſuperſtitions of *Indian* paganiſm threatening to approach them; and on both accounts deeply apprehenſive for themſelves, and frequently in the bitterneſs of their ſpirits complaining: What

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muſt become of our helpleſs abandoned children after us! Strangers, many of them barbarous, without hand to poliſh them; almoſt ſavage, without means to civilize them; groſsly ignorant and unprincipled, without inſtruction to enlighten them; turbulent and factious, and few or none to diſcipline and ſoften them; capable indeed of being made, in the higheſt degree, uſeful to the *Britiſh* colonies, that have received them, but as yet without any proper care to render them ſo; and as capable, ſhould they unite amongſt themſelves, or unite with our enemies, of diſturbing the peace, and even unhinging the government of the provinces they inhabit, or bringing them under the yoak of a foreign power and juriſdiction: Let but the MAN, the CHRISTIAN, the BRITAIN paint out this ſcene of things to his own mind, and it is not an imaginary but a too real one; and will he not immediately find his own heart warmed with the moſt tender compaſſion towards theſe deſtitute and unhappy ſtrangers, and be powerfully influenced by his principles, affections, and love of his country, to afford them ſome ſubſtantial proofs of his benevolent regards to them, in order that *the wilderneſs and ſolitary place may be glad* through them, *and the deſert rejoice and bloſſom as the roſe*; when the advantage and pleaſure ſhall reach *Great Britain* herſelf, which then will be truly happy, and then only can be happy, when religion, virtue and

liberty

liberty proſper at home, and under her influence are ſecured to all her colonies abroad.

It ſhall only be added, what can be ſaid with the utmoſt truth, that the deſign of this addreſs to the publick is truly generous, and without any the leaſt mixture of party view whatſoever; and 'tis hoped, that the known characters of the noble lords and gentlemen, who have voluntarily engaged themſelves in this ſervice, will place them above any poſſible ſuſpicion, of doing any thing in oppoſition or injurious to the national eſtabliſhment, or inconſiſtent with the laws and intereſts of *Great Britain*. The aim is, not to encourage ſects, but to ſupport and propagate thoſe unqueſtionable principles of religion and proteſtantiſm, of which the church of *England* herſelf is the great protectreſs and bulwark; not to withdraw from her communion any that belong to it, or prejudice any againſt it that are willing to enter into it, but to preſerve alive in the minds of the preſent, and tranſmit to future generations, thoſe important truths, which ſhe allows and teaches as the eſſentials of chriſtianity. The aim is, to render the perſecuted for conſcience ſake eaſy and thankful in their exile; to procure them the means of knowledge they are diſtreſſed for want of; to provide their families with thoſe early inſtructions, they are themſelves incapable of providing for them; to maintain the peace and ſtrengthen the ſecurity of our colonies;

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to prevent our trade from being turned out of its natural and proper chanel, by foreign connections and influence; and in a word, to render thoſe, who are the ſubjects of the *Britiſh* crown upon account of the places where they dwell, real ſubjects of it by a community of language, natural connections, ſtrong inclinations, and a fixed laſting ſenſe both of intereſt and duty. And in theſe views, and theſe only, the ſcheme is moſt humbly recommended to the bleſſing of providence, and the attention, favour and benevolence of the publick.

F I N I S.

SUBSCRIPTIONS *for this charitable purpoſe are taken in at Sir* JOSEPH HANKEY'S *and Co. in Fenchurch-ſtreet, and at Sir* RICHARD HOAR'S *and Co. in Fleet-ſtreet.*

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